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STATES-ITEM

Bowers Trial For Fire Death Opens Tuesday

HATTIESBURG, Miss. (AP) —Sam H. Bowers Jr., a former imperial wizard of the White Knights, goes on trial here tomorrow on charges of murder in the death of Negro voting rights leader Vernon Dahmer.

Bowers, 44, of Laurel, was indicted on the charge last November after winning a mistrial on arson charges stemming from the 1966 firebombing of Dahmer's home and store near Hattiesburg.

He was one of the 13 men originally indicted for arson in the case and among eight of those since indicted for murder.

Billy Roy Pitts, a former klansman who testified in Bowers' arson trial, said Bowers gave the order to firebomb Dahmer's home and to kill him if possible.

Judge Stanton Hall will hear the case in Forrest County Circuit Court.